

## The Nerault Family

Jean Baptiste dit Bellerose Nerault of Cheneval, diocese of Lyon, France, and son of Joseph Nerault and Phliberte Bonbois, shows up in the colonial records of the German Coast as early as 1755. His first wife, Suzanne Huval (Euvalle, Uval, Duval, Uvalle), is the daughter of Henri Huval and Marie Jeanne Morelle, according to Carol Huval Saucier in "Iberville Parish Records" (Judy Rifel, editor). Suzanne's siblings were Jean Huval, born in Paris and who married Veronique Leger in Louisiana; Catherine Huval, who married Henri Beaufin; Marguerite Huval, who married Jacques Lucien in 1758 and Geneveau Huval, who married Dominique Bourgeois in 1769, brother of Marie-Anne Bourgeois.

"Jean Huval was a property owner and acted as witness in many transactions in the colony," writes Saucier. "His nickname was 'Blondin,' meaning fair-skinned or blond. Jean married around 1753-1754 to Veronique Leger, daughter of Thomas Leger, a native of Heidleberg, Germany, and Marguerite Materne, a native of the German Coast, Louisiana."

In the German Coast records, Jean Huval (Euvalle) is listed as selling three arpents of land to his beaux-freres (brothers-in-law) Henri Beaufin and Jean Baptiste Nerault. Henri Beaufin, son of Nicolas Beaufin and Nicolle Jinotte, married Catherine Euvalle, a native of Asi and daughter of Henrie Uval and Jeanne Marelle, on Nov. 12, 1753, at the Little Red Church of St. Charles Parish. Witnesses were (spelled as signed) F. Prosper, Jean Uvalle, H. Beaufin, Darensbourg and Ferrand (p. 78).

For several years, Jean Euvalle or Uval (it differed with almost every colonial record; when he signed his name on one record it was spelled "Jean Euvalle") transfers or sells property to Jean Baptiste Nerault and Nerault does property transfers of his own. And somewhere along the way Suzanne died.

Jean Baptiste Nerault, by the way, is listed in the colonial records and in the New Orleans Archdiocese records as Neyrod, Nero, Verou and 'Belle Rose.' Through several cross references, his name appears to be Nerault. Later, his descendants in Acadiana change it to Nereaux.

Jean Baptiste Nerault married Magdelaine Molinot on May 27, 1766, in the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans. The marriage contract ("Louisiana Marriage Contracts, Vol. 2," by Alice Day Forsyth) read:

"Before me, the Royal Notary of this Province of Louisiana and a resident of New Orleans, appeared the following persons:

Jean Baptiste Nerau, a resident of this City, and a native of Chenevel Diocese of Lion, son of Joseph Nerau and Philiberte Boubois, his father and mother of the first part, with Demoiselle Magdelaine Moulineau, a resident of this City, a native of St. Louis Diocese of Quebec, minor daughter of the deceased Francois Moulineau and of Margueritte Gorderin, his widow, the father and mother, of the other part.

Signing on the part of the future groom, Pierre Dupont and Louis Quiery, his friends.

And for the named Demoiselle, the future bride, Arnaud Carogne, her stepfather, Antoine Garon and M. Braquier, her friend.

A promise this marriage to be solemnized in the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

Their properties, movable and immovable to be administered according to the ordinance of community of gains and acquets, conformably to the old law of Paris.

The future bride, owning in her right, clothes and utensils valued at 500 livres.

The future husband settles on the future wife a jointure of 1,000 livres and the preciput of 500 livres.

Signing – J.B. Neyrod, Gauvin, Braquier, J. Maison, Gosson, Garic, Notary.

Magdelaine Molinot (Moulineau) was born Feb. 25, 1751, in New Orleans and baptised in the St. Louis Cathedral, although her marriage certificate claims she was born in Quebec. Her parents were Francois Moulineau and Margueritte Gorderin with Christening sponsors Francois (Braquier) Braquier and Magdelaine Brazilier (St. Louis Cathedral records, B2, 210). When Margueritte Gorderin

remarried Renauld Caronne (Carogne) on Sept. 9, 1760, in St. Louis Cathedral, the marriage entry states her as the widow of Louis Le Lus (possibly Louis LeCosset), and Caronne as a native of St. Michel Parish, Archdiocese of Bordeaux, France, and son of the deceased Pierre Caronne and Perinne Martin, (St. Louis Cathedral records, B4, 60). Witnesses are Jean Le Cosset, Raimond Bardon and Jean Le Cosset, fils.

Jean Baptiste Nerault and Magdelaine Molinot (Moulineau) marry on May 20, 1766, with this contract ("Louisiana Marriage Contracts, Vol. 2"; St. Louis Cathedral records, B5, 193 and M2, 23):

"Before me, the Royal Notary of this Province of Louisiana and a resident of New Orleans, appeared the following persons

JEAN BAPTISTE NERAU, a resident of this City, and a native of Chenevel Diocese of Lion, son of JOSEPH NERAU and PHILIBERTE BOUBOIS, his father and mother, of the first part

with

Demoiselle MAGDELAINE MOULINEAU, a resident of this City, a native of St. Louis Diocese of Quebec, minor daughter of the deceased FRANCOIS MOULINEAU and of MARGUERITTE GORDERIN, his widow, the father and mother, of the other part.

Signing on the part of the future groom, PIERRE DUPONT and LOUIS QUIERY, his friends.

And for the named Demoiselle, the future bride, ARNAUD CAROGNE, her stepfather, ANTOINE GARON and M. BRAQUIER, her friend.

A promise this marriage to be solemnized in the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

Their properties, movable and immovable to be administered according to the ordinance of community of gains and acquets, conformably to the old laws of Paris.

The future bride, owning in her right, clothes and utensils valued at 500 livres.

The future husband settles on the future wife a jointure of 1,000 livres and the preciput of 500 livres.

Signing – J.B. Neyrod, Gauvin, Braquier, J. Maison, Gosson, Garic, Notary.

Note: This marriage solemnized in the St. Louis Parish Church of New Orleans on May 27, 1766."

\*Note: An Antoine Gosson married Francoise Gorderin Aug. 10, 1762 (St. Louis Cathedral records, B4, 71). One of their children, Silvain, born Oct. 20, 1766 in New Orleans, was sponsored by Margueritte Gorderin (St. Louis Cathedral records, B5, 147).

Jean Baptiste Nerault and Magdelaine Molinot have the following children:

1. André Nerault, born Nov. 11, 1769 (baptized Feb. 25, 1770 in New Orleans, St. Louis Cathedral records, V.2, p.214), who married Marie Louise Prudhomme (daughter of Michel and Catherine Raiternaurem) in Opelousas on July 7, 1793, and had seven children by her;

2. Francois Nerault, who married Francoise Emilee Mayer (see Mayer family in Chapter One) on Jan. 7, 1805, and then Marie Melazie Breau (Braud family follows) at the St. Gabriel Church in Iberville Parish on Jan. 2, 1818 and is buried in 1836;

3. Jean Baptiste Nerault, born Aug. 5, 1772 (baptized Sept. 11, 1772 in St. Charles Parish), who married Felicite Prejean (daughter of Armand and Magdelaine Martin) on May 19, 1795, and has seven children by her; and

4. Louis Nerault, who married Mariana Kleinpeter (daughter of Johanne George Kleinpeter and Gertrude Hetz of Germany, then Frederic County, Maryland, and widow of Jean Alexandre Dardenne) on July 15, 1799, and had three children by her.

Jean Baptiste Nerault died around 10 years after his marriage to Magdelaine. Magdelaine Molinot Nerault married Antoine Lanclos on Feb. 27, 1778, at the Edgard Catholic church (St. John the Baptist records, M1, 9). This is Antoine's second marriage; his first wife was Julienne Castan (Castagne).

Antoine was born Aug. 10, 1745, the son of Jean Baptiste Lanclos of Picardy, France, and Marie-Anne Bourgeois and named for Antoine Boucherant (his parraine; his marraine was Marie Anne Chevalier, his grandmother).

The following was a parish record for Antoine Lanclos and Magdelaine Molinot:

Nov. 3, 1779      No. 9

“Antoine Lanclos and his wife, Madelaine Moulino, petition Robin de Logny to be allowed to sell a farm six arpents wide which was community property of Madelaine Moulino and her first husband, Jean Baptiste Verou (Nerault), and is now the property of Moulino and her minor children by Verou. Petition granted. The farm is six arpents wide by the customary depth and is bounded below by the property of Andre Portier and above by that of Francois Tourangin...Sold to Frederic Bertrand for 152 piastres...(Note: Magdelaine Moulino signed her name ‘Molino.’)”

In the German Coast colonial documents, Antoine Lanclos is described as a “resident of Attakapas,” and it is likely he spent time in the Attakapas District before returning home and marrying Magdelaine. During the mid to late 18th century, Acadian exiles, Spanish immigrants and French adventurers began settling the Attakapas District, the area surrounding and including St. Martinville. After Antoine and Magdelaine sell the farm on the German Coast, they move to St. Martinville and have many children of their own.

The children of Antoine Lanclos and Magdelaine Molinot Nerault are:

1. Antoine Lanclos, born Aug. 22, 1781, in St. Martinville, who married Marie Stuts on Feb. 4, 1806, in Opelousas;
2. Alexandre Lanclos of Iberville, who married Marie Louise Hargroder in 1803, and whose daughter, Marie Celestine Lanclos, married Jean-Baptiste Hébert, a descendant of Joseph Landry and Marie Richard;
3. Augustin Lanclos, born in Opelousas;
4. Jean Alexandre Lanclos, born Sept. 23, 1783, in St. Martinville;
5. Louis Lanclos, born Sept. 2, 1792, in Opelousas;
6. Marie Anne Lanclos, who married Mateo Guillory in Opelousas;

7. Placide Lanclos, born March 11, 1788, in Opelousas.
8. Elysa Lanclos, died May 25, 1798, as an infant;
9. Marie Frosine Lanclos, born Jan. 2, 1796 in St. Martinville.

John K. Harrell wrote in “Jean Baptiste Neyrod die Bellerosse (Nero), A Frenchman of Early Louisiana” (New Orleans Genesis, July, 1994, Vol. 33) that a family named L’enclos is listed in the 1788 Census of Opelousas with one adult male, one adult female, two teenage males, five younger males and two younger females.

He further quotes the “Genealogical Register” by DeVille (March 1960, Vol. 7, p. 8) that has Pere Lanclos in the 1793 Census of Opelousas with 11 arpents of land. Next door is Jean Baptiste Nero with two arpents of land and Andre Nero with five arpents of land.

At the turn of the 19th Century Manne’s District, the area around Grand Coteau, Prairie Des Femmes and Prairie Laurent was home to the “Lanclos Brothers,” according to records of that time. Three of the Nerault brothers continued to live in St. Landry until their deaths, but Francois Nerault and Antoine Lanclos and Magdelaine Moulinot Lanclos move to Bayou Jacques near Plaquemine.

In “Daily World, St. Landry History from the 1690s,” the special edition of the Opelousas newspaper states that a Nerault bought land from Lenclos in 1796, from Suire and Lenclos in 1802, and from Chenier in 1804. A L’Enclos bought property from Villars in 1791 and a Lenclos bought land from Clark in 1788. Suire sold Johnson land in 1802 and their relationship with the Nerault brothers follows.

On April 2, 1804, Baptiste Thisonau, a free man of color, sold a portion of land at Grosse Pointe de Bois de Mallet to Francois Nerault. The property is

bounded by the lands of Furcie Hollier and Michel LaVergne. Despite the fact that Francois moved to the Plaquemine area around this time, this property remained in the family for decades, becoming part of Francois's succession in 1836 in Iberville Parish.

## **Les Freres Nerault**

### **André Nerault**

In the Slave Tax of 1807, André is listed as owning 400 arpents of land on Bayou Teche with a value of \$1,100. Jean Baptiste also owns 400 acres on the bayou with a value of \$850. Near them on Prairie Laurent are Francois Robin, William Leland, William Johnson and Jacques Roman.

In the Sheriff's tax roles of 1818, Andre owns four slaves and Jean Baptiste 30 horned cattle. Francois is listed as owning land on Bayou Mallet at a value of \$600, 200 acres of "land that has high potential for such development."

André lived on Bayou Tortue at one time. An Aug. 30, 1811, certificate to Francois Ozenne states his land was a "claim founded on settlement for 12 years by André Nerault on Bayou Tortue."

André and Jean Baptiste settled at Prairie du Gros Chevreuil, a literal prairie that stretches between Bayou Teche and the Atchafalaya Basin from around St. Martinville to Opelousas. St. Martin Parish Conveyance Record No. 3098 of Feb. 4, 1817, places André on 5 X 40 arpents of land on the right bank of Bayou Teche on "the Prairie Gros Chevreuil in St. Landry Parish bounded by Michel Fose and George Mayer." André sold the property that year to Michel Cormier for \$500.

On Oct. 1, 1845, an "Andrew Nerault" registers his property with the U.S. General Land Office in New Orleans, stating that he purchased property in St.

Landry Parish per the “provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820.” This land is in Section 61 in the Township of 7–South, Range 5–East and consisting of 52 acres.

André died on July 24, 1847, in Opelousas and was buried at the old St. Landry Church Cemetery. His marker (No. 879) states:

“Virtuous and modest, and generous. He spent his life helping the unfortunate. Tender father, good husband, affectionate parent, sincere and devoted friend. He takes with him the regrets of his friends, and that of a large and inconsolable family.”

Andre Nerault and Marie Louise Prudhomme’s children were: Catherine Arthemise, Celestine, Delphine, Ludger, Marie Adeline, Marie Louise and Mathilda.

The September, 1847, Franklin “Planters’ Banner” listed the following advertisement for public land sale:

The Public are hereby notified that there will be sold at Public Auction, to the last and highest bidder, by the undersigned Testamentary Executor of André Nerault, late of the Parish of Saint Landry, in the Prairie Gros Chevreuil, distant about fourteen miles from the Court House of Opelousas.

On Monday the 25th day of October next, 1847, and the following days, the following property of said deceased, in community between him and the heirs of his deceased wife, Marie Louise Prud’homme,

1. The Plantation and Tract of Land, whereon the deceased last resided, situated in the Parish of Saint Landry; lying in the place called Prairie Gros Chevreuil, fronting on the Bayou Teche, and running back forty arpents, having twenty–five arpents in the front, more or less, bounded on the upper side by land of Robin freres, and on the lower side by lands of the Estate, with all the Buildings and other Improvements thereon erected, consisting of a large and fine Dwelling House, Magazines, a Gin House and Cotton Gin, and other buildings and fixtures. The Crop on said plantation will be sold separate therefrom.

2. A certain Fraction of Land, situated in said Parish of Saint Landry, in Prairie Gros Chevreuil, fronting on the Bayou Teche, and running back forty arpents, having ten arpents in front, bounded on the upper side by the above described tract, and below by lands belonging to the estate.

3. Another Tract of Land, adjoining the above tract, fronting on said Bayou Teche, having ten arpents in front by the depth of forty arpents,

bounded on the upper side by the last above described tract, and on the lower side of the estate.

4. Another Tract of Land, situated in said Parish, and at said place called Prairie Gros Chevreuil, fronting on the Bayou Techem containing eight arpents in front by the depth of forty arpents, bounded on the upper side by the last above described tract, and on the lower side by lands of André Nerault Robin.

5. A Tract of Parcel of Land, situated in said parish and designated as follows: Lots No. 3, 4 and five of Section 19, the 1 4, 3, 4, and 5 of Section 30 of Township seven, South of Range 6 East, containing five hundred and seventy-seven and 14-100 acres lying in Prairie Gros Chevreuil.

6. A Fraction of Land, containing thirty-eight and 50-100 acres, situated in said Parish, in the rear of the tract, belonging to Madame Michel Hargroder, being lot No. — in Township seven, South Range 5 East.

7. A Tract of Land, in the Parish of Saint Landry, lying, being and situate on Bayou Mallet, containing sixteen hundred superficial arpents, more or less.

8. A Plantation or Tract of Land, situated in the Parish of Saint Martin, on the left bank of the Bayou Teche, measuring 19 arpents in front by the depth of forty arpents, bounded above by lands of Joseph B. Gillard, and below by lands of Martin Durald, together with all the Buildings, Fencings and Improvements thereon erected, consisting of A large Dwelling and other Buildings. The Crop reserved and will be sold separate.

9. Another Tract of Land, situated in the same parish, and neighborhood, containing five arpents in front, on the left bank of Bayou Teche, by the depth of forty arpents, bounded above by lands of Madame Michel Hargroder, and below by lands of Joseph B. Castille.

10. Another Tract of Land, same place and Parish, containing ten arpents in front by the depth of seventy-seven arpents, more or less, bounded towards the bayou Teche by the lands of Madame Michel Hargroder, towards the Grand Bois by the Bayou Fuselier or Tourneur, above by the division line of the Parishes of Saint Martin and Saint Landry, and below by a tract of land belonging to the estate.

11. Another Tract of Land, same dimensions, say ten arpents in front by the depth of seventy-seven arpents, more or less, situated in the same Parish, bounded towards the Bayou Teche, in part by lands of Joseph B. Castille, and in part by that of Mme-Alexandre Savoie, and above and below by lands belonging to the estate.

12. Another Tract of Land, in same place, containing ten arpents in front by the depth of seventy-seven arpents, more or less, bounded towards the Bayou Teche, in part by lands of Madam Alexandre Savoie, and in part by lands of Joseph B. Gillard, above by the last above described tract, and below, by lands belonging to Adrien Gilbeaux.

The above lands are well adapted to the culture of Sugar and Cotton.

103 Slaves, of different ages and both sexes, many of them very likely, among which are several Mechanics.

About 600 herd of Vacherie Cattle, about 90 herd of Vacherie Mares and Horses, 29 Work Mules, 18 pair of Work Oxen, six American Horses and Mares, about 50 head of Gentle Cattle, about 20 head of Sheep, about 30 head of Wild Cattle in Prairie Gros Chevreuil, 15 Gentle Creole Horses. Various articles of Household Furniture, 1500 or 2000 or more barrels of Corn, Plantation Tools, and other articles too numerous to mention. The sale will be made on a Credit, the terms and conditions of which will be fixed and made known on the day of sale. Acts of sale will be passed before Yves Davy, Notary Public, at the expense of the purchasers.

**William B. Lewis,  
Testamentary Executor  
Opelousas, La., Sept. 11, 1847**

### **Jean Baptiste Nerault**

Jean Baptiste died Dec. 29, 1813, at age 40, leaving behind seven children. They were: Jean Baptiste, Marie Frozine, Jean Louis, Marie Magdalen, Sylvere, Marguerite and Marie Advenline.

### **Louis Nerault**

Louis died on Feb. 23, 1844, on the Prairie du Gros Chevreuil. His wife, Marianne Kleinpeter, was buried Aug. 12, 1817. His children were: Bernard, Artemise and Adeline.

### **Francois Nerault**

Despite Francois Nerault's presence in St. Landry Parish, his residence is noted before and after this time period as Iberville Parish, specifically Plaquemine.

In Sidney Marchand's "Pioneer Settlers in the Second Acadian Settlement, 1772-1829, Ascension Parish," he states that Antoine Lanclos gave power of attorney to Francois Nerault "to secure and maintain" land on Bayou Plaquemine that was bought from the chief of the "nacion Chetimaches." Marchand states

that this Ascension Parish documents lists Spanish Governor Luis De Unzaga and his brother of officials documenting the exchange. The land claim was apparently disputed by a Mrs. Jacob Schelatre in *Reboul vs. Nero*.

When the United States bought the Louisiana Territory in 1803, Americans surveyed land throughout Louisiana. Several records state that Antoine Lanclos, Francois Nerault, Antoine Lanclos Jr., Amerant Lanclos, Alex-Andre Lanclos, Lussin Lanclos and John Mayer all bought property from the Chitamachas tribe along Bayou Jacques in Iberville Parish.

Sidney A. Marchand, in "The Flight of a Century (1800–1900) in Ascension Parish," writes that the Chitmachas resided on Bayou Jacques after being pushed there by encroaching colonists.

"The Chetimaches Indians, who in 1717, by order of Governor Bienville, were driven from their old camping grounds at the junction of the Lafourche des Chetimaches and the river Meschesabe, are still dwelling upon the banks of Bayou Jacques in the country of Iberville. Their chiefs, from time to time, for a paltry consideration, dispose of large and valuable tracts of land to the Whites." (Marchand footnote: *Reboul vs. Nero*, 5 Mart. O.S. 490; 5 Mart. O.S. 655; 4 Ann. 141.)

In the early 19th century land records by the United States, there is mention of several arpents being purchased first from Dominique Bourgeois, who purchased the land from the Indians. The American government repudiated these claims, however, because the Chitamachas sold the land without the approval of the Spanish government (who owned Louisiana at that time). "The Indians, under the Spanish Government, were not permitted to sell the lands they occupied, without the act of Government concurring in the sale, and granting the land to the purchaser," the parish document states. "We consider that, since the cession of the territory to the United States, the Indians had no

right to sell this land without the authority and concurrence of Government; and are therefore of opinion that this claim ought to be rejected.”

Bayou Jacob (Jacques) lies just above the town of Plaquemine, immediately southwest of Turnerville. Francois Nerault lived near Jean Mayer, probably the Jean Mayer who married Francoise Frederic and father to Francoise Mayer, so it is likely that it was here that Francois Nerault met his future wife. Also, the Mayer family settled in St. Landry Parish near the settlement of André Nerault.

Francois Nerault married Francoise Emilie Mayer (daughter of Jean Mayer and Francoise Frederic of St. John the Baptist Parish) on Jan. 7, 1805, in Iberville Parish, with André as a witness. Their marriage entry at the St. Gabriel Church list Bonnet Carré as Francoise Mayer’s address when she resided in St. John the Baptist Parish.

The children of Francoise Mayer and Francois Nerault are:

1. Marie Celestine Nerault, born Aug. 16, 1816, who married Adolph Raoul Charré;
2. Marie Celine Nerault, born Aug. 12, 1807, and buried Sept. 27, 1814;
3. Francois Nerault, born May 14, 1811, and buried Jan. 4, 1813;
4. Norbert Nerault, born Oct. 12, 1814, who married Rosalie Capdeviel;
5. Sylvien Nerault, born Dec. 30, 1812, who served as a constable of Iberville Parish in 1845;
6. Ulchere (Ulgere) Nerault, born Feb. 20, 1806, and buried May 25, 1809;
7. Victorine Nerault, baptized Sept. 9, 1809.

On June 10, 1814, Francois Nerault registered this conveyance records with the Parish of Iberville:

I Francois Nero, knowing only how to sign with my ordinary mark in the presence of the witnesses whose signatures appear below, recognize that I owe to M.E.R. Franiol (sp?) the just sum of four hundred six piastres which I promise and oblige myself to pay to him at his orders, according to the following terms; that is to say, two hundred six piastres which I engage myself to pay on the tenth of next August and two hundred piastres which I will pay to him next November with interest computer from the fifteenth of last May until the debt is completely paid out, at the rate of ten percent per year and as collateral for the debt I declare to effectuate mortgages on two slaves, that is to say, a Negro named Sara, thirty years old, and a Negro named (unintelligible) approximately thirty years old. I hereby declare that in case of non-payment, I will pass the first mortgage in entirety to the owner of the property.

**Iberville Parish, June 10, 1814  
Francois Nero, under his usual mark**

In the War of 1812, during the Battle of New Orleans, Francois Nerault, Jean Nerault and another Nerault (probably their brother Luis) joined Jacques DeVillier's Company, 8th Regiment or Colonel Nathan Meriam's Regiment, of Iberville Parish. The group formed Line Dupre, the second line of defense one and a half miles behind Andrew Jackson's line that was never used due to the American forces quickly defeating Britain. André Nerault served in the 16th Regiment, listed as "Thompson's."

"The men from Iberville Parish played their part in defending Louisiana from the much larger British force," writes Arthur Perkins Jr. in "Iberville Parish History, Vol. 1." "They formed Captain Jacques DeVillier's Company, 8th Regiment, or Colonel Nathan Meriam's Regiment, which was responsible for digging and improving the second line of defense of New Orleans. This line was called Line Dupre and was located about one and a half miles behind Line Jackson. Had the British soldiers penetrated Line Jackson, Line Dupre would have been their next encounter. But on January 8, 1815, Jackson's success

over the British was deadly. The British lost more than two thousand men to Jackson's seven killed and six wounded."

Francoise Mayer Nerault was buried on March 8, 1817, and Francois Nerault remarried Marie Melazie Breau on Dec. 31, 1817, at the St. Gabriel Church in Iberville Parish. Melazie Breau was one of sixteen children of Jean Baptiste Pierre Breau and Marguerite Dardenne, who were married at St. Gabriel on July 27, 1779.

## **The Breau/Braud Connection**

Jean Baptiste Pierre Breau gazed expectantly out of the sailing ship *Guinea* as it slowly made its way up the Mississippi River toward Natchez on a late winter day in 1768. Pierre could hear the exasperations of many of his family members, and those of the Landry and Babin families, among others, as the rustic fort came into view.

Upon hearing of successful settlements by Acadians in Louisiana Pierre, his sister Marie and widowed mother Marguerite Breau embarked on the journey south from Port Tobacco, Maryland, a place he had called home since the Acadians had been exiled from Nova Scotia in 1755 by the British. Pierre was born the year before, baptized in Pisiquid, Nova Scotia. Since almost half of all Acadians died from disease and exposure on the fateful voyages during *le grand dérangement*, Pierre considered himself lucky to have survived.

Pierre gratefully didn't remember the voyages his family was made to take when the English had decided to rid Acadia — or Nova Scotia as the English called it — of the French-speaking residents. During several dark, ominous days

in October 1755, Acadian farms were burned, their livestock and personal goods stolen and families loaded onto ships as if human cargo. Wives were separated from their husbands, the sick not cared for, children placed on ships other than their parents. While the Acadians prayed and sang hymns on the cold shores, waiting for commands from the English, many died from exposure to the elements. Some said it was from grief.

Then, when the ships sailed away from their beloved Acadia, the sea exploded as if God had reacted to the inhumanity of it all. Pierre had heard all the horrible stories of the men, women and children who died on those fateful voyages, ill clothed to make the cold journey. Some were sold into slavery; children were separated from their parents. Some Acadians lingered for years in English prisons.

Pierre's family had been fortunate to find refuge in Maryland, where Catholic residents were more sympathetic to the "French Neutrals." However, his father, Simon Breau, son of Antoine Breau and Marguerite Dugas of Acadia, died there, around 1767-68. Simon's father was son of Antoine Brot and Marguerite Babin. That Antoine Brot was the son of Vincent Brault and Marie Bourg. Vincent Brault arrived in Acadia around 1652 from La Chaussée, region of Loudun, department of Vienne, France.

Pierre's mother, Marguerite Landry Breau, was the daughter of Joseph Landry and Marie Josephe Richard, who were married Nov. 3, 1733, in Pisiquit, Acadia. Joseph was the son of Rene Landry and Marie Dugas; Marie was the daughter of Rene Dugas and Marie Babin.

While at Port Tobacco, Marguerite Breau earned money sewing shirts for the Jesuit minister George Hunter. Pierre's maternal grandparents had lived at Port Tobacco as well, but did not survive to see Louisiana.

When Pierre and his family had finally made it to New Orleans on Feb. 11, 1768, they had hoped to reunite with other Breau family members upriver at St. Gabriel and Cabannocé, present-day St. James Parish. The Spanish government had other ideas, however, demanding that they help defend the Louisiana colony against the British at Fort San Luis de Natchez. Honoré and Alexis Braud, son of Alexandre Braud and Marie Dugas who had been separated from each other and their families for twelve years in Maryland, argued the most, calling the Spanish government's insistence on settling them at Natchez as a diaspora. The brothers had begged Spanish Governor Antonio de Ulloa "to allow them to settle along the German Coast or that of the Acadians, for they cost the king nothing and had consumed the small amount of money which they possessed."

Ulloa refused and demanded the exiles leave New Orleans aboard the Guinea or face deportation. The Acadians, consisting of forty percent widows and nine percent orphans, did as they were told, but Honoré and Alexis went into hiding, continuing the fight to reunite the displaced Louisiana Acadians.

Pierre was 13 when they landed at Natchez in 1768. He and his family received one of the largest of the grants — nine arpents of land. Like the other Acadians, they worked hard at developing farms on long, narrow lots facing the Mississippi River about 2.5 miles below what is now Vidalia, Louisiana. But, they never stopped demanding to be settled near the others. Ulloa continued to refuse their requests, even when the settlers were raided by Indians and subjected to unsanitary water conditions, and the Braud brothers continued their rebelliousness. On Oct. 26, 1768, several French residents "disgusted with Ulloa's administration" overthrew his regime and sent him packing.

The next Spanish Governor, Alejandro O'Reilly, was more sympathetic; he allowed the Natchez Acadians to settle at St. Gabriel, and the Breau/Braud family was finally reunited after years of living in poverty and exile. Marguerite

Breau remarried Paul Hébert, a resident of St. Gabriel and son of Paul Hébert and Marguerite Josephe Melancon of Acadia, on Dec. 25, 1782.

Judge Felix Voorhies, in his “Acadian Reminiscences,” wrote about the Louisiana reunion as it was told to him by a Maryland exile:

“Ah, how can I describe our joy and rapture when we recognized countenances familiar to us. Grasping their hands, with hearts too full for utterances, we wept like children. Many a sorrowing heart revived to love and happiness on that day. Many a wife pressed to her bosom a long lost husband. Many a fond parent clasped in rapturous embrace a loving child. Such a moment repaid us a thousandfold for all our sufferings and privations, and we spent the day in rejoicing, conviviality and merriment!”

Although impossible to confirm — since both Jean Baptiste and Breau/Braud were common names to the area — one Jean Baptiste Braud found himself in quite an embarrassing situation, one recorded for prosperity in Carl Brasseaux’s “The Founding of New Acadia.” “Neglected by their husbands,” Brasseaux writes, “some Creole women formed liaisons with young Acadian bachelors; such illicit unions, however, were usually detected by the cuckold husbands, frequently with violent results. One such incident involved Sieur Bertonville, a French-born surgeon, who returned home in July, 1773, to find his wife and young Jean-Baptiste Braud in bed. According to Judice [Louis Judice, commandant at Cabannocé], ‘when Sieur Bertonville entered his home and witnessed this ugly spectacle, he became enraged. He got his musket, placed the gunbarrel against his wife’s body, and would have killed her, as well as the boy, if the gun had fired, but fortunately, it misfired. The boy and the worthless woman saved themselves, each running in opposite directions, one holding his pants in his hands, the other her skirt.’ ”

In 1777, Pierre Breau, a 22-year-old bachelor, served as a fusileer in the Militia of the Coast of Iberville Parish, St. Gabriel. On July 27, 1779, Jean Baptiste Pierre Breau married Marguerite Dardenne at Donaldsonville.

Marguerite Dardenne was born in 1758 in Natchitoches, the daughter of Charles Dardenne and Louise L'Agee, and died in 1828. (Marguerite's brother, Jean Alexander Dardenne, married Marianne Kleinpeter who, after Jean's death, married Louis Nerault.)

Louise Dardenne was the daughter of Jean L'Age, a German tailor and soldier at Natchitoches, and Francoise Jeanne Buard of Morges, Bergne, Switzerland. Louise was born in 1730 and buried at St. Gabriel on Nov. 22, 1818. Charles Dardenne's birth and death are unknown, but he was discharged from the French army on Nov. 1, 1750, one year after his marriage to Louise.

Jean Baptiste Pierre Breau had sixteen children with Marguerite. They are:

1. Felix Athanase Breau, baptized May 6, 1780, and married Louise Staub on Sept. 18, 1809;
2. Marianne Louise Breau, born May 27, 1781, and married Henry Vigee on Aug. 12, 1799;
3. Pelagie Breau, born Jan. 25, 1783, and married Francois Suire (possibly the man Francois Nerault attacked in Opelousas) on Feb. 8, 1807;
4. Felicite Breau, born Sept. 5, 1784, and died Sept. 13, 1784;
5. Charles Breau, born April 11, 1787, who married Adelaide Nerault on Jan. 26, 1818, daughter of Louis Nerault and Marianne Kleinpeter;
6. Jean Pierre Breau, born Dec. 18, 1788, who married Marie Louise Bark on April 15, 1808;
7. Marie Francoise Breau, born July 29, 1790, who married Maxmillion Catoire on March 1, 1813;

8. Andre Treville Breau, born July 29, 1790, who married Apoline Marguerite Staub on Sept. 8, 1816;
9. Marie Hortense Breau, born May 5, 1793, who married John Billings on Feb. 11, 1823;
10. Marie Melazie Breau, born Dec. 5, 1794 (more on her later);
11. Marguerite Breau, born Aug. 3, 1796, who married Pierre Gelusseau on Nov. 1, 1819;
12. Jean Solomon Breau, born November, 1779, who married Catherine Staub on May 7, 1821, the sister of his two brothers' wives, Louise and Apoline Staub;
13. Josaphine Olesime Breau, born Oct. 29, 1800;
14. Felix Breau, born March, 1802, and was buried March 20, 1803;
15. Marie Felonise Breau, born Aug. 30, 1803, who married Pierre Cleandre Lambremont on June 23, 1823; and
16. Felix Breau, born about 1806, who married Marie Badeau on May 26, 1828.

Marie Melazie Breau married Francois Nerault on New Year's Eve, 1817, at the age of 23 (Francois had to have been in his 30s or 40s). When they were planning their wedding, they recorded a marriage contract with Iberville Parish Judge John Dutton. The contract, listed as No. 552 on Jan. 24, 1818, states:

“Before John Dutton, judge of the Parish of Iberville, personally came Francois Nero of the one part, and Meliza Breau, daughter of Pierre Breau and Marguerite Dardenne...Who did declare that whereas thereis shortly a marriage to be had and celebrated between the said party, they have contracted as follows.

First, there shall be a community of acquest and goods during the marriage.

Second, the intended husband declares to give unto this intended wife the sum of one thousand dollars, but it is contracted by and between the party that in case the intended wife should die before the intended husband, then and in that case the thousand dollars shall return to the intended husband, otherwise it remains with her forever.

Third, the property of the intended husband consists in the property estimates in the ...lists to the value of the sum of (no amount is given).

Fourth, the property of the intended wife consists in the two hundred dollars in cash acknowledged.

In witness whereas the said party hath hereunto made this ... declaring not to know how to sign in presence of J. B. (?) and John Billings, witnesses, hereto require the 24th Jan., 1818.”

Dower rights were common among the French in Louisiana, following the custom of the “Coutume de Paris.” “The douaire, separate from the dot which her parents provided her on marriage,” writes Vaughan Baker and others in “Le Mari est Seigneur: Marital Laws Governing Women in French Louisiana,” “was the property claim granted a woman from her husband’s personal property for her upkeep and subsistence should she survive him. It gave widows the means of living honorably, according to the station of their dead husbands.”

The marriage contract signatures included Charles Breaux (note the x at the end of the name), Pierre Breau, Marie Meliza Breau, Francois Nero, Marguerite Dardenne and, of course, Judge John Dutton. In other parish conveyance records, Francois signs his name “Nero” and “Nerault” but the signature changes each time and there is always an “X” next to the name, a sign that Francois was illiterate. In this document, all parties signed their name next to an “X.”

Melazie Breau and Francois Nerault had the following children:

1. A child, who died at age two and was buried Feb. 17, 1824;
2. Andre Edmond Nerault, born Aug. 2, 1820 (Celestine was a sponsor at his baptism), who married Francis Apoline Demoulette on Jan. 7, 1853;
3. Marguerite Eliza Nerault, born Dec. 2, 1824, who married Louis Boudreaux;
4. Marie Estelle Nerault, born Oct. 23, 1822;
5. Marie Felicia Nerault, baptized at age two on Sept. 26, 1828, who may have married Adolphe Breaux;
6. Ursin Nerault, born Jan. 4, 1828, who married Anne Felicie Gellusseau (Melazie's sister Marguerite married Pierre Gellusseau);
7. Francois Napoleon Nerault, born Sept. 4, 1818;
8. Emma Nerault, born Oct. 5, 1835, who married Frederick Brown;
9. Leocade Nerault, born Nov. 15, 1831; and
10. Marie Honorine Nerault, born June 10, 1830.

In the Census of 1810, a Pierre Breau Jr. and Sr. live next door to Widow Ls. Nero and Jno and Widow Franchebois on the Plaquemine side of the Mississippi (Iberville Parish Conveyance Records of Jan. 23, 1799, state that Louis Nerault bought land from John Franchebois).

The Census of 1820 places Pierre Jean Baptiste Breau at the area of St. Gabriel, along with a Jean Pierre Baptiste Breau, fils, and Charles Breau (their name is spelled Braud here). That same year Francois Neraud lived at Bayou Plaquemine, working in agriculture and commerce with 11 slaves.

Another record claims Francois Nerault and Louis Dardenne purchased the Portage property from Joseph Erwin in 1828 after the Mississippi River flooded Iberville Parish below Plaquemine.

The General Land Office of the United States at New Orleans issued a certificate on October 6, 1841, regarding the cash sale of Francois Nerault for land in Iberville Parish. The certificate claims that Francois Duplessis, a signee of Francois Nerault, certifies that Nerault paid for the land “according to the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820.” The public land that Nerault purchased was in “Lot (or section) thirty-eight in Township Nine of Range Eleven, East in the District of Lands subject to sale at New Orleans, Louisiana, containing one hundred and thirty-six and sevety five hundredths of an acre.”

Francois Nerault died in May 1836, according to Father Donald J. Hébert’s “Southwestern Church Records.” Hébert cites succession record No. 748 filed in the Opelousas Courthouse.

The 1840 Census of Iberville Parish lists a Widow Francois Neraud with two young males and three young females in the household. On the adjoining page is Bernard Neraud, son of Louis and Marianne Kleinpeter Nerault. Bernard, born Mary 4, 1814, married Marie Mathilde Dupuy, daughter of Aubrey Dupuy, a major in Col. Meriam’s 8th Regiment at the Battle of New Orleans, and Marie Clothilde DeVillier, on March 27, 1826, in St. Gabriel. Bernard and Marie Nerault owned Crescent Plantation in Iberville Plantation, according to “The Kleinpeter Legacy” by Lynette LeBlanc Kleinpeter. Bernard’s sister, Adeline Nerault, born in 1801, married Melazie’s brother, Charles Breau, on Jan. 26, 1818, in St. Gabriel. Louis’ other son, Artemise, died Sept. 14, 1817, at age 16. Bernard also appears in the 1870 Census of Iberville Parish, record No. 295.

Bernard also registered a land grant with the U.S. General Land Office on Nov. 9, 1952, stating a purchase he made in 1832. His property was listed as west of the Mississippi River in Section 105 in Township 10–South in Range 12–E of Iberville Parish. He owned 218 acres and “sixty one hundredths of an acre.”

On July 16, 1856, the succession of Francois Nerault was filed in the courthouse of Iberville Parish. It states:

To the honorable the judge of the Sixth Judicial District Court of the State of Louisiana in and for the Parish of Iberville. The joint petition of Melazie Braud, widow of Francois Nerault, due in her capacity of natural tutor of her minor child Emma Nerault, of her marriage with said Francois Nerault, of Silvain Nerault of \_\_\_ line, Nerault widow of Adolphe Charré, both of full age, children of the first marriage of said Francois Nerault with Mayer, deceased, of Marie Honorine Nerault, a minor immancipated by marriage with Lumir H. Islain Claine (sp?), of the said Lumir H. Islain herein appearing to authorize his wife the said Marie Honorine being a grandchild that of said Francois Nerault representing the father Norbert Nerault, deceased, who was a child since of the first marriage of said Francois Nerault, of Edmond Nerault and Ursin Nerault and Eliza Nerault of full age, wife of Don Louis Boudreau of the said D.L. Boudreau herein appearing to authorize his wife the said Edmond, Ursin and Eliza Nerault being children herein of said Francois Nerault, issue of the second marriage of said deceased Francois Nerault with Melazine Breaux, his widow and the petition of Adolphe Breaux in his capacity of natural tutor to his minor child Nerault – a grandchild of said Francois Nerault – in that mother Felicia Nerault deceased, wife of said Adolphe Breaux who was a child of the second marriage of said Francois Nerault, deceased, with Melazine Breaux, his widow, all residing in said Parish with the exception of Celestine Nerault, who resides in the City of New Orleans and Marie Honorine Nerault \_\_\_ Lumir A. Islain, who resides in the Parish of Ascension. Respectfully reports:

That the said Francois Nerault at his death was the owner and proprietor of certain property in a certain tract of land situated in the Parish of St. Landry in this State at the place called “Grosse Pointe du Bois Mallet” and which is now fully particularly described in an act of sale of the same to the deceased by one Baptiste Chisonau, free man of color, under date of the 28th of April, 1804, thereto amiacal and made a part hereof.

That the said tract of land was the separate property of said deceased Francois Nerault and (never been) disposed of still belongs to his Estate.

That when the balance of the property belonging to his succession was ordered to be sold the tract of land above mentioned was also decried to be sold after an inventory and appraisement should be made, that the order for a commission directed to the Parish Judge of that Parish of St. Landry for that purpose was granted by the Probate Judge of the Parish under date of the 11th (or 01) May 1836 after which can be seen by reference to the proceedings – in the late Probate Court of the Parish in the mortuary proceedings of the Estate of said Francois Nerault, but that no return of said commission appear to have been made.

Now therefore (your) petitioners being (dismissed) partition of said tract of land by a sale \_\_\_ be divided in \_\_\_\_ necessary to cause an inventory and appraisement of said tract of land to be first made according to law, wherefore your petitioners jointly may that an inventory with appraisement of said tract of land may be made according to law and for that purpose they may that a commission issue from this Honorable Court directed to the reorder of the Parish of St. Landry wherein said tract of land is situated \_\_\_ an inventory and appraisement of the same according to law and that he made his return thereof in the shortest possible delay to this Honorable Court. And forth all such \_\_\_ in the premises your petition of will \_\_\_

**July 16, 1856**  
**Signed Adonis Petit, ally for petition**  
**Me. F. Estevan, Clerk**

In the reading of filing of the foregoing petition it is ordered that a commission to the Recorder of the Parish of St. Landry ordering him to make an inventory and appraisement of the tract of land described in the above petition belonging to the Succession of Francois Nerault, deceased, and before his appointed Estate to appraise said property according to law.

**Iberville, July 16, 1856**  
**Signed Me. F. Estevan, Clerk**

Underneath this document is a letter in French that appears to document the transaction between Baptiste Chisonau (“livre habitant”) and Francois Nerault of land at Grosse Pointe du Bois de Mallet.

In the 1860 Census of Grosse Tete, Melazie is mentioned as the Widow F. Nereaux, age 62, with her son, Ursin, age 30, listed as “overseer.” Ursin Nerault married Anne Felicie Gellusseau on Feb. 3, 1852, the same day his sister, Marie Eliza Nerault (listed as being from Bayou Gross Tete), married Louis Boudreaux. Lucien Charré was a witness, and his connection follows. Among Melazie’s household in 1860 are Amanda, Edward and Hypolite Nereaux, ages 8, 6 and 5 respectively, probably the children of Ursin. Melazie’s other daughter, Emma, who married Frederick Brown on June 14, 1860, is listed as living with Melazie at this time; Frederick’s occupation is listed as “copper.” The family reside on

land valued at “2,500” between the estates of Kleinpeter and Daigre.

Also, in the 1860 Census of Grosse Tete, Edmond Nereaux, grandson of Jean Baptiste Nerault and son of Jean Louis Nerault and Marie Bergeron, who was born May 27, 1831, is listed with: Francoise A. Nereaux, 23; André A. Nereaux, 16; Francoise H. Nereaux, 14; Nancy Nereaux, 6; Napoleon Nereaux, 5; Phelicia Nereaux, 3 and Onorine Nereaux, 1.

On Jan. 21, 1878, a year the yellow fever claimed many lives of the Gross Tete and Rosedale area, Marie Melazie Nerault died at the age of 85.

On a side note, there were several politicians in the Nerault/Nereaux clan. An Andrew Nereaux ran for state representative of St. Landry Parish in 1834. Since there are no Andrews listed in the diocese records of the Opelousas area, one can assume this might have been André, since he was a prominent landowner. Louis E. Nereaux Jr. was twice an alderman of Rosedale, the neighboring town of Grosse Tete, from 1972–1976 and 1980–1984. A J.B. Nereaux was an Iberville Parish assessor in 1868.

Among the 19th century Neraults, a Nerault is buried in the Plaquemine Protestant cemetery and Edmond Nerault (1861–1944) and Julia Emily Nerault (1871–1961) are buried at Grosse Tete.

The spelling of the name from Nerault to Nereaux occurs as early as the second and third generations from the Nerault Brothers, around 1840. Today, the name is Nereaux, and there are several families of that name living in Rosedale, New Iberia, Breaux Bridge, Arnaudville and Lafayette.

## **Opelousas Poste Records**

There were numerous St. Landry Parish documents filed by both André Nerault and Francois Nerault around 1803–1804. The following are some of those complaints that were filed.

**April 14, 1804**

Guillaume Lalonde vs. André Nerault, condemnation.

**July 10, 1804**

I the undersigned hereby declare that at the request of M. Johnson, I went to the place under discussion on the 8th of this month and examined and recognized that the fences of M. André Nérault's lot were always open to Mr. Johnson's pigs, that ever since the month of March the fences were worthless and left openings for animals, that the calves had passed through, that the gates are always negligently left open, that it is by no means surprising that animals can escape, that pigs can go in when there is food out which attracts them; I am prepared to declare this, in the presence of the authorities, who should know this. In good faith I hereby sign this declaration at Opelousas on July 10, 1804.

**Francois Suire**

**July 10, 1804**

I the undersigned declare that upon the request of M. Johnson I went to the place under discussion on the tenth of July and I examined and recognized that the fences and gates of Mr. André Nérault's lot were always open to entrance by Mr. Johnson's pigs, which I am ready to declare under oath in the presence of the authorities who should know this, and I hereby affirm this, in the good faith of which I sign this declaration; at Opelousas the 10th of July, 1804. I have also observed two places where the pigs could pass because of the bad condition of the fences.

**Signed with the mark of  
Baptiste LaLonde**

**Oct. Roman, witness and S. Roman, witness**

**July 10, 1804**

I the undersigned declare that upon the request of Mr. Johnson I went to the place under discussion on the eighth of this month and examined and recognized that the fences and gates of Mr. André Nérault's lot are always open so that Mr. Johnson's pigs enter, which I am ready to declare under oath in the presence of the authorities who should know about this and I hereby affirm in good faith of which I sign this present declaration. At Opelousas, the 10th of July, 1804.

I declare, not knowing how to write, that I have made my mark below...

**Signed with the mark of Guillaume LaLonde**

**Witnessed by (?) Roman and Oct. Roman**

**July 10, 1804**

An account for what André Nérault owes to Johnson for the days taken up in recognizing the animals which had been marked (branded) by the aforementioned Nérault, which is why he was sentenced to a fine and the expenses which must be paid by him; this is why I am claiming five days taken up by this work of identification. This brings the sum owed up to fifteen piastres for which I request an order to be paid immediately. At Opelousas, the 10th of July, 1804.

**William Johnson**

**July 15, 1804**

To M. De la Chaise, Commandant of the Post of Opelousas, the 15th of July, 1804.

In response to the letter which you have honored me by writing to me on the 11th of this month, I have the honor of sending to you attached to this the account statement which you have instructed me to send to you. I have not specified the sum of my lost crops, leaving that to be pronounced by you in your justice.

I have the honor to be, with my respect, Mr. (Signature illegible, followed by "Your humble servant")

**Witnessed by the mark of Guillaume LaLonde**

**July 15, 1804**

William Johnson, residing in the District of the Grand Chevreuil has the honor to state to M. Le Commandant that M. André Nérault, a resident of the same place, has killed two pregnant sows, maimed a pig, and that I am missing four others; that the conduct of M. Nérault convinces me that he has also killed them; he is my neighbor and my enemy; for such damages and two days of lost time, I wish to be paid, and this will necessitate my coming to the Post. I pray M. Le Commandant to rule with wisdom in this case for my expenses, the cost of my lost animals, and the time I have lost because of this wickedness.

**Opelousas, the 15th of July 1804**

**William JOHNSON**

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the letter that you honored me by sending, ordering me to have André Nérault arrested, I sent word to him to come to my house; he did not come. I went myself to his home, and I spoke to his wife, telling her that her husband had to come to my home. Two days passed without his coming; I then presented to him the statement of account; he refused to pay, stating that he

did not want to pay M. Guillaume LaLonde, pretending that he had an account directly with him, but not producing it. I offered to have LaLonde come immediately. He refused again. This is why, seeing his bad faith, I ordered that he be immediately arrested and taken to prison.

With respect and greetings,

**W. Johnson**

**July 25, 1804**

To M. De La Chaise, Commandant, Post of Opelousas

Sir,

I hereby have recourse to your authority so that it may sustain within the bounds of respect that one owes to property the following:

Here are the facts that I allege against M. André Nérault. He promises to pen my animals on his property. A horse who had a broken leg was found at a short distance from M. Nérault's home. It belonged to M. Honoré Fortier, who had left it in my keeping. I had someone look at it immediately in order to determine the facts. I also declare since last Spring, he promises to enclose both in daytime and at night, a certain number of my animals; among these, there are two who have broken horns, which proves some act of violence. This is the reason which I ask you, Sir, to forbid M. Nérault from having any access to any of my property, and in case of recidivism, I promise to make a case against him before the authorities.

It seems that M. Nérault is not at all afraid of what has happened, relative to the case last year of two calves which he branded, since he allowed himself to brand others this year; such an offense to the tranquility of this Post deserves to get him kicked out. This will doubtless be the result of his conduct, Sir, since he is already known to you for such excesses of all kinds.

I am honored to greet you, Sir. I remain your humble servant.

**(?) Roman**

**Aug. 14, 1804**

Honoré de la Chaise judges that André Nérault must pay LaLonde 55 piastres. He has an eight-day grace period.

**Sept. 3, 1804**

I send Mr. Francois Suire with my negro to do my work in the woods, and Mr. Francois Suire appeared before me and declared that Mr. Francois Nérault came to him and attacked Suire at the back of a large farmhouse and stripped off his shirt inviting him to fight. Francois Suire informed Nérault I am a ...and I can not fight and I don't come here for to fight. I come here to work for my employer. Francois Nérault said put down your ax, accordingly Suire put down the ax and told Francois Nérault I can not fight, but maybe I can find you a man. I told Francois Nérault why don't you come to me at my house where I live at William Johnson or among people, and Francois Nérault said he does not care for

Johnson nor for nobody else and wife said since today (?) and this is the third (or thirteenth) time Francois Nerault have attacked me, and also treat me with the horse whip (in French he says beat with a whip) if ever I go to the river. Therefore I hope the authority will give me justification for the reason I have not want for myself in the woods (this last sentence is unclear).

**Most humble servant, Francois Suire  
Co-signed by William Johnson**

**Sept. 7, 1804**

In conformity with the order which you have given me I began the census last Saturday. I also asked M. André Néault about the enclosure the repayment for which he was judged responsible by your judgement during the month of August; he asked me if it was M. Duralde's order that I had demanded, to which I answered that I had demanded for the public good; he refused to pay the order specifying the sum which your judgement required of him; he called me a rascal at my home because of this demand, and that was witnessed by Guillaume LaLonde Jr. It is for this reason that I am asking you for justice.

I am also asking, M. Le Commandant, for a new warrant against M. Francois Néault, who, in front of a witness, attacked in the woods, in a place not far away, my hired man Francois Suire, whose declaration is attached to this, and who because of this attack no longer wants to go and work in the woods, which is causing me a real problem. I am requesting also, M. Le Commandant, that you force André Néault to prove that I am a rascal, calling him for reparations before your tribunal.

**William Johnson**

**Sept. 11, 1804**

To M. Honoré De La Chaise, Commandant at Opelousas for the United States of America

Sir,

Francois Néault, merchant in this Post and citizen of the United States of America, has the honor to request that you have Michel LaLora arrested; he is here at present and is about to leave this place. I want this so that he will repay the sum of forty piastres which he owes for a horse that he sold to me although it was rented from M. Chabot who proved that it was his property. Since I cannot remain here very long, I want his property seized if he defaults on the payments. I ask your assistance in helping me to obtain justice.

**Opelousas the 11th. of September, 1804**

**F. Néault**

On Sept. 28, 1804, Francois Nerault charges Louis Chevalier de Villier for money owed him (more money that Francois owed him, he states), presenting to Honoré de la Chaise, civil commandant of Opelousas, a detailed copy of charges to the amount of \$257.24 on Oct. 10, 1804. Francois claimed that de Villier retorted to his charges with “abuse” and “ill language,” and insulted him by calling him “a retailing store keeper.”

On Oct. 11, 1804, Mary Emmanuel Meusnier, who “lived with M. Francois Nerault in the capacity of a Clerk,” testified on the conditions of their cabin, apparently owned by Villier but rented by Francois Nerault at a sum subject to the debts Villier owed him.

“M. Nerault would never get an answer from Mr. Villier respecting the hire of his cabin. Mr. Nerault never burnt or suffered any of his tenants to burn any rails or fences of Mr. Villier. He employed somebody to cut fire wood about a hundred yards outside of the (environs?). The few rails which I ever saw about the house were almost rotten; he disposed of them to fence in a small field close by intended for potatoes. M. Villier took up one fourth of the cabin’s yard to make a garden which as it stood and yet stands was very much in the way and unpleasant to M. Nerault who was in that situation for five months. To my knowledge M. Nerault did as much good to the cabin and premises as could be. The house was in a leaky condition. A great portion of the gallery corners stood ... and the cabin being unfinished and opened to great many parts to the weather, having no floors, hardly any good doors and the door locks having been supplied by M. Nerault. To my knowledge great many of his goods were damaged, such as blankets, twine, sugars, etc. I never knew perceived that M. Nerault had applied directly or indirectly to M. Villier for any provisions such as geese, hogs or hearthenware of any kind, the intercourse between Mr. Nerault and Mr. Villier being very uncommunicable. Mr. Villier being seldom at home and seeming to incline to avoid the calls of Mr. Nerault by comparing said cabin to houses hired by gentlemen in this neighborhood. My opinion is that eight dollars a month is an extraordinary price for it. It is built in a low ground and was at different times overflowed in the best rooms.”

**Mary Meusnier**  
**(André Prudhomme as witness or possible translator)**

On Oct. 11, 1804, the “cabin” is blown down by the wind. On Oct. 12, 1804, D.J. Sutton declares the house in bad shape.

### **Chronology of Opelousas Poste Documents Re: Nerault/Lanclos families**

- Jan. 20, 1790: Petition for land by Antoine Lemlos  
March 10, 1796: Antoine Lanclos to Andre Nerault  
July 23, 1802: Andre Nerault, acting for Antoine Lanclos and Magdeleine Molinos, sell to Francois Suire  
Aug. 27, 1802: Exchange of land between Baptiste Nerault and Francois Suire  
Dec. 1, 1802: Land sale from Suire to William Johnson  
Dec. 1, 1802: Baptiste Nerault sells to James Mullins of Attakapas  
Dec. 10, 1802: Baptiste, acting for Antoine Lanclos, to Andre Nerault  
Dec. 24, 1802: Exchange of land between Andre Nerault and James Mullins  
March 28, 1803: Sales of slaves from Honore Fortier to Andre Nerault  
April 11, 1803: Andre Nerault vs. Onezin Roman, Guillaume Lalonde, fils and others  
Aug. 10, 1803: Complaint and sentence concerning the cattle brand of Andre Nerault.  
Sept. 20, 1803: Letter from Jean Baptiste Nerault to Martin Duralde pertaining to the case of Claude Bougaud and Sylvestre Bossie.  
Feb. 3, 1803: Antoine Chenier sells land to Jean Baptiste Nerault, 10X40 arpents on Bayou Teche bounded by lands of Depanet and public domain.  
Oct. 18, 1803: Copy of notes due Francois “Herault”  
1804 Francois Nerault vs. Lewis Villier, his debtor and Jean Baptiste Lienard, agent for Villier.  
Jan. 9, 1804: Claude Bougaud vs. Sylvestre Bossie, letter from Francois Nerault to de la Chaisse.  
Jan. 30, 1804: Sales of land from Dame Marie Catherine, widow of Jacques Mollins, to Jacques Roman, officer of the legion, three arpents (part of six) purchased from Baptiste Nerault.  
March 10, 1804: Request for opinion  
April 2, 1804: Sales of land from Baptiste Thisonau, free mulatto, to Francois Nerault, a portion of land at Grosse Pointe at Bois de Mallet.  
April 9, 1804: Sale of land from Antoine Lanclos to Francois Nerault, 12X40 arpents at Plaquemine Brulée, bounded by lands of Michel LeDoux and Chiasson.

- April 12, 1804: Deposition of D.I. Sutton concerning the condition of Francois Nerault's cabin, the one he rents from Villier.
- April 14, 1804: Guillaume Lalonde vs. Andre Nerault, condemnation.
- July 10, 1804: Andre and problem with pigs.
- July 21, 1804: Petition by Andre concerning a debt owned Guillaume LaLonde.
- July 22, 1804: Letter and account of William Johnson against Andre Nerault.
- July 24, 1804: Andre Nerault and Guillaume Lalonde, sentence.
- July 25, 1804: Letter to Chaise about Andre, signed by Roman.
- Aug. 14, 1804: Concerning the sentences of Guillaume Lalonde and Andre Nerault, Judgement of Honeré de la Chaise, Commandant, that Nerault pay Lalonde 55 piastres.
- Aug. 25, 1804: Statement of Andre that the 8-day grace period allowed Guillaume Lalonde for payment of his debts has passed.
- Sept. 3, 1804: William Johnson vs. Francois Nerault
- Sept. 7, 1804: Letter from William Johnson to Chaise regarding Andre Nerault.
- Sept. 11, 1804: Francois Nerault vs. Michel Lacaze, request of Francois to stop Lacaze from leaving because he owns Nerault 40 piastres.
- Sept. 28, 1804: Francois Nerault to Louis Chevalier de Villier, complaint of faulty housing.
- Sept. 28, 1804: Francois Nerault vs. Villier concerning conditions of cabin which caused sickness. Invoice included.
- Oct. 10, 1804: Certified copy of bill.
- Oct. 10, 1804: Villier gives Jean Baptiste Lienard power of attorney.
- Oct. 11, 1804: Deposition by Mary Emmanuel Meusnier, clerk who lives with Francois Nerault.
- Oct. 11, 1804: Deposition of Roger Ouest. House was blown down by wind.
- Oct. 28, 1804: Francois Nerault vs. B. Tissoneau, petition for payment of debt.
- Nov. 29, 1804: Villier appoints Jean Baptiste Lienard to represent him.
- May 12, 1805: Sale of land from Francois Joseph Dubuisson to Francois Herault, 6X40 arpents on Grand Bayou at Grand Prairie, formerly belonging to Steven de Lamorandier. Bounded by lands of Madam Fusilier and Gross Etienne.
- May 25, 1813: Guillaume Lalonde fils vs. Antoine Lanclos petition.
- Aug. 23, 1813: Estate of Antoine Lanclos, sale at auction.

### **St. Landry Parish Successions for Nerault Family**

- April 12, 1813: Estate of Francois Hereaux  
 1814 Jean Baptiste  
 1828 Felicite Prejean Nerault  
 1831 Marie Adeline Nerault

1834  
1836  
1846  
1847

Eveline Nerault  
Francois Nerault  
Marie F. Nerault  
Andre Nerault